TWO

FAREWELL LETTERS:

I. To an Anonymous, and Skulking CRITICAL REVIEWER.

II. To the MONTHLY REVIEWERS.

BY

PERCIVAL STOCKDALE.

Des Hommes vils, et lâches, voudroient proſcrire la Verité; des Gens puiſſants, et ſouvent même mal intentionnés, ſous prétexte qu'il eſt quelquefois ſage de la taire, la banniroient entiérement de l'Univers.

HELVETIUS.

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BRITISH MUSEUM

ADVERTISEMENT.

AS Literature has long been my profeſſion, amidſt many diſcouragements, and misfortunes, I am ſure that every liberal reader will excuſe me, if I am warmly attached to my literary intereſt, and reputation; if I take every fair opportunity of endeavouring to defeat thoſe diſhoneſt, and malicious arts, by which they *have* been, and may be hereafter, injured. But I ſhould not, of late, have preſumed repeatedly to requeſt the attention of the publick to theſe objects, if I had thought that my own welfare alone had been concerned in their diſcuſſion. More extenſive, and important objects are involved in it; —juſtice to authours, in general; and to thoſe, who love intellectual entertainment, and improvement. Several liberal ſcholars with whom I have had the honour to converſe, have laughed at my idea of giving any conſequence to Reviewers, by writing againſt them. The laugh, I doubt not, was ſincere; but it would not have been excited, if, on *one* paſſage in the annals of our literature, they had been accuſtomed to recollection, or conſideration. On minds like *theirs*, the miſrepreſentations of Reviewers may have no weighty, or improper influence: but the great majority of mankind (and conſequently, of readers) are too indolent for inquiry: and what they find aſſerted in print (eſpecially pompous edicts, formally iſſued from a chair of criticiſm) impoſes on them, with a kind of ſpecious authority. Hence, the characters which are given of books by the Reviewers, determine the reading, and the taſte of a great number of perſons; not only in our remoter counties, but in the metropolis itſelf;—not a little to the prejudice of authours of merit;—eſpecially

if

if they are unaided by fortune, and unprotected by power; —and if they have not caught a tinſel, and tranſitory luſtre from the beams of that meteor, faſhion; diſdaining to be meteors, themſelves.

Let me, therefore, hope that ſeveral ingenuous minds will honour the two following letters with a diſpaſſionate, attentive, and deliberate peruſal. The taſk of a Reviewer is, by no means, an arduous one, with regard to abilities; it demands a competent ſhare of learning; a good underſtanding, and taſte;—but, alas! it demands what, I am afraid, is far more rare; a heart ſuperiour to malignity, and to ſiniſter influence. If I have here demonſtrated, that the treatment which I have experienced from Reviewers, has been diſhoneſt, and unprincipled, in the extreme; *that* demonſtration alone, when the world is ſufficiently acquainted with it, ſhould explode, and annihilate, all their uſurped, and ſpurious authority, in the republick of letters. And *this* I beg leave to aſſert, not from an arrogant partiality to my own fortune, as an authour; but from the conviction which muſt be received, of *their* guilt, if I have proved the charges which I have brought againſt them, to be real, and incontrovertible.

I wiſh that two or three able, and ſpirited writers would aſſiſt me to exterminate theſe robbers from the commonwealth of the Muſes; neither much pleaſure, nor dignity could attend the *immediate* execution of the enterprize; but it's effects would be of ſervice to the nobleſt exertions of the human mind; and therefore, they would be productive of honour. Indolent, and habitual credulity, like other bad habits, takes a deep root in the human mind: it muſt be eradicated by confederate, and indefatigable ſtrength.

November 12, 1792.

A
FAREWELL LETTER
TO
AN ANONYMOUS, AND SKULKING
CRITICAL REVIEWER.

May's Buildings, Nov. 5, 1792.

CITIZEN SCRIBBLER,

TO counteract the injurious effects which even *your* unprincipled malignity may poſſibly produce in ſome good, but unguarded minds; and to make the publick ſtill better acquainted with the true character of the *Critical Reviewers*, I have impoſed on myſelf the very humble, and inglorious taſk of once more addreſſing *you*.

I moſt unfeignedly thank you for the poſt which you aſſigned me in your Review for Auguſt. There, you ſhowed yourſelf merciful in your puniſhment; there you permitted me to cloſe your obſcene triumph, and that of your other nightmen: for I would, at any time, rather be flogged at the tail, than careſſed in the midſt of a dung-cart.

I will be as conciſe with you as I *can* be, conſiſtently with juſtice to myſelf. I have ſome virtuous merit when *you* fix my attention, and employ my thoughts. For ſentiment, and taſte are then the victims to my idea of what is right.

 I have

I have lived long enough, to be acquainted, in *general*, with human nature; and to have a *particular* knowledge of Reviewers. Converſant as I was, with *your* diſpoſition, and manœuvres, I exactly anticipated (if you were again ſo condeſcending as to deign me any notice) the treatment which I have received from you. Not to ſpeak with an exaggerating ſenſe of the merit of the Appendix to my *Obſervations on the Writings, and Conduct of our preſent Political and Religious Reformers*, I have proved in that Appendix, that you have been guilty of ſeveral groſs and deliberate falſehoods, injurious to me, as a man, and an authour. Therefore, to wave any regular refutation of the charges which I had brought againſt you; (ſhafts which are not *pointleſs*, and which it would have been impoſſible for you to repell); to make me an object of your pity and contempt;—to brand, and traduce me, as a writer who has abuſed the moſt reſpectable characters;——theſe were the only ſubterfuges, the only replies that were left, for the heart, the talents, and the habits, which actuate *your* fraternity.

You endeavour to repreſent me to the publick as one whoſe mind is mortified and ſoured by the diſappointments which I have ſuffered from thoſe who have moſt of our preferments in the Church at their diſpoſal. However plauſible, however probable this reproach may appear, the reverſe of it is the truth. Diſappointment is always in proportion to expectation; and if *my* expectations from our ſuperiour Clergy had ever been ſanguine, I muſt have been incapable of drawing one juſt inference from my experience of human nature. I have ever written in defence of what I thought important and ſalutary truth; without adopting the prejudices of party; without an immoral, and ſervile regard to individuals. This independent, and explicit conduct leads a man quite out of the way of fortune; by what infatuation, then, was I to hope for the ſmiles, and the patronage of the Powerful, in general; but eſpecially, of Church-men in power; who, of all other men, are the moſt crouching idolaters of Fortune; whoſe caution, and whoſe pride, attach them only to diſcreet, and ſtagnant ſouls like themſelves; who as they are the moſt uncandid

uncandid of all men to the failings of their neighbours, retain, *yet*, ſo much of Popery, as to have none but *venal* indulgences for the Unfortunate, and the Free; —and whoſe hoſtilities are as dark, and timorous, as they are malignant, and pertinacious? Beings, who are extremely deſpicable, in themſelves, may, by indefatigable induſtry, and by ſpecious arts, for awhile, miſlead the publick; and, conſequently, may do temporary injuries to individuals. I have therefore, thought it incumbent on me to employ ſome of my time in expoſing, and refuting the iniquity of *Prieſts*, and *Reviewers*. Every one who is conſcious of any manlineſs in himſelf, will allow that I *may* have done this, without ſuffering any permanent, and painful chagrin: from *that* mental malady, I have been always free;—it might, indeed, have gradually taken hold of me, from thoſe inconveniences in life, which are inſeparable from an ingenuous diſpoſition, and it's correſpondent habits; and from an inevitable, from a proper ſenſe, of my unequal fate;—but I (thank GOD) I have hitherto been able to repell the gloomy foe, by my natural vivacity; by the literary application, and diſcipline of my mind;—by keeping it in it's own elevation; by raiſing it, from time to time, with a new ſpring; which was vigorous in proportion as the capricious, and fantaſtick deity was aſſiduous to overtop, and ſink it, with her groteſque, and heavy lumber.

I take this opportunity honeſtly to aſſure the publick, that if I have *made worthy men my foes*, I am ſincerely concerned for that conſequence of my ingenuous and free publications: their freedom muſt always cheer the clouded atmoſphere of my fortune;——for it has been exerciſed in the cauſe of civil, of moral, and of religious truth. The worthieſt men have their weakneſſes, and their prejudices; and many men of this character converſe, and act, as if they thought that mere wealth, and title, ſhould exempt our ſuperiours in ſtation from explicit, and publick cenſure. Thus, from the timid conduct of mankind, and from the falſe, and mean opinions, which are at once the effects, and the concomitants of that conduct, our *deſert*, both on account of the ſtrain of our writings, and of the apparently awful and impregnable objects to whom they

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are directed, may, by thoſe whoſe eſteem we ſhould wiſh to poſſeſs, be pronounced our *demerit*.

Let the liberal reader permit me to remind him, that a mutilated paragraph or period; or, indeed, a mutilated expreſſion, may make an authour appear very malicious, or very ridiculous, when a fair quotation of the reſpective paragraph, period, or expreſſion, would ſhow him to advantage. If a proper attention was given to *this* remark by thoſe who honour the ſtrictures of Reviewers with any weight, it would explode a favourite, and hackneyed art of thoſe *French* murderers, and manglers of authours; of which art I am ſurpriſed that a diſcerning, and generous publick has not long ago ſpurned the futility, and the turpitude. In the critique to which I am referring, one of thoſe literary executioners has lopped and ſlaſhed *me*, as, with a cold, and mercileſs hand, he has often disfigured others. In *one* citation, however, he has given me wonderful fair play; where I aſſert "that Dr. JOHNSON was one of the moſt "abſurd, and injurious of Criticks; that he had all the "prejudices, and all the ſuperſtition of the weakeſt old "woman; and that *his death was humiliating to the friends* "*of religion.*" I am ſtill convinced of the truth of theſe aſſertions; therefore I am not aſhamed of them; the laſt one I publiſh in Italics; as in that form it is quoted by my Reviewer: Thoſe words rouze my humane, and tender-hearted creature to a generous indignation:—for he had ingeniouſly diſcovered that they contain *a cruel, and atrocious inſinuation.* Now, that a *Critical Reviewer* may miſrepreſent the life, or the death of a man, either by dark inſinuation, or impudent declaration, appears to *me* not only poſſible, but extremely probable: but of ſuch baſeneſs, I hope that *I* am incapable. I thought that the terms in which I mentioned the death of DR. JOHNSON could not have been tortured, or miſtaken:—my complete, and as I thought, my clear meaning, when I uſed thoſe terms, was, that it muſt be humiliating to the friends of religion, to reflect, that the death of a BOLINGBROKE, a SHAFTSBURY, and a HUME, was tranquil, and ſerene, and that the death of Dr. JOHNSON, who had been, all his life, a ſtrenuous and ſincere advocate for Chriſtianity, was deſponding, ſuperſtitious,

ſtitious, and daſtardly, in the extreme. I have endeavoured to expreſs my meaning in the moſt perſpicuous, and in the ſtrongeſt terms:—as it can do me no diſcredit with the impartial, and the judicious;—all in it, that is *cruel*, and *atrocious*, I cheerfully conſign to the moſt equitable, and benevolent of tribunals, that of the *Critical Reviewers*.

"In this *furious* production (ſays my Reviewer) the Biſhop of LLANDAFF is called an apoſtate from the CHURCH OF ENGLAND."—I have moſt certainly given him that appellation: whether from blind fury, or from a ſpirited, and laudable uſe of my reaſon, as an ingenuous, and warm friend to the CHURCH OF ENGLAND, let thoſe diſpaſſionate, and ſenſible judges determine, who have read, or who may, now, be induced to read the Charge which deſerved the ſevere animadverſions of every honeſt man who wiſhes to ſupport our ſacred eſtabliſhment.—To have the proper eſteem of the candid judges to whom I now appeal, they will permit me to lay before them the following paragraph of the pamphlet which has been moſt unmercifully ſcarified by my Critical Empirick. I flatter myſelf that the appellation of APOSTATE, will not be deemed ſo invidious as it may appear in its exiled ſtate, in its inſulated crevice; enveloped with fogs, and ſurrounded with quagmires; and that another of my aſſertions,---"That any chimney ſweeper's boy in this "metropolis, might, in time, be as good a chymiſt as "Dr. WATSON," will be thought a plain, incontrovertible truth; not *mean abuſe*; when it is reſcued from the ſolitary, and hoſtile cell, where it has been tyrannically cooped up in the literary *Baſtille* of the *Critical Reviewers*. I beg pardon of my readers; but where my imagination is employed on a fertile ſubject, it loves to change it's metaphors, and ſimiles:---and in theſe bold tranſitions, I am warranted by the example of HOMER.

"You have obliged me to give to the publick my "ſentiments of the Biſhop of LLANDAFF; and I give "them with ſome reluctance; but when I feel it my duty "to be explicit, and ardent, my opponents, if they pleaſe,

"may

" may pronounce me intolerant, and malevolent. After
" reading a charge which he lately delivered to the
" Clergy of his Dioceſe, I was both mortified, and pleaſed
" to find *his* example only *one* exception, in *one* impor-
" tant inſtance, to the reſt of our Biſhops. In conſe-
" quence of that charge, I deem him neglectful of his
" moſt ſacred oaths, and engagements; an apoſtate from
" the CHURCH OF ENGLAND; one who wiſhes to de-
" liver her into the hands of her inveterate and implaca-
" ble enemies. Moſt of us are ſo much inclined, and
" habituated to prefer our private to the publick weal, that
" I cannot hope to be readily, and cheerfully believed,
" when I ſincerely declare that I have a poorer opinion of
" this man than of the Biſhop of DURHAM. I muſt ex-
" preſs my ſuſpicion that the charge to which I allude,
" was dictated by a very criminal vanity, eager to catch
" the air of popularity by a mean, and ſingular tergiver-
" ſation, holding forth the ſpecious pretext of meekneſs,
" and benevolence. I humbly think that the bloody Prieſt,
" who inſiſted that I ought to be ſhot *, as a deſerter,
" ſhould firſt ſhoot the Biſhop of LLANDAFF; not that
" I do not think that I ſhall ſurvive many unwieldly
" Biſhops; but he, as my ſuperiour, ought to have the
" precedence to the platform of death; and if I *muſt* be
" pronounced a deſerter, I hope I ſhall not be thought
" partial to myſelf, if I aſſert that *his* deſertion is more
" actual, and glaring than *mine*. I was glad to find that
" the charge had not a particle of the talents which you
" aſcribe to it; it is, indeed, very feebly written. How-
" ever, I wiſh that he had been dozing over his chy-
" miſtry when he wrote it; which, I think, is a ſtudy that
" ought not extremely to intereſt the mind, or engroſs
" the time of a Biſhop. Nor has he ſhown any bright-
" neſs of talents by being an adept in chymiſtry. Any
" perſon endowed with *common* ſenſe, may be a chymiſt, a
" botaniſt, or a mathematician. To make a great pro-
" greſs in ſcience, patience, and perſeverance, are only
" requiſite; the praiſe of bright, and vigorous talents is not

* See the Preface to my Correſpondence with the Biſhop of DURHAM.

" applicable

« applicable to him who has made ſuch a progreſs, unleſs that « progreſs breaks out into invention, and diſcovery. Any « chimney-ſweeper's boy in this metropolis might, in « time, be as good a chymiſt as DR. WATSON; to attain « *his* excellence, he has only to deſcend from ſoot to fire; « and to be as aſſiduous with the crucible as he has been with « the bruſh. Fine talents are apt to give a ſanction even « to groſs, and dangerous errours; I am an enthuſiaſtick « admirer of them, in my worſt enemies; therefore I am « conſoled by knowing that the biſhop of LLANDAFF'S « ſurrender of the CHURCH OF ENGLAND derives no « luſtre from the ſtrength, and ſplendour of his mind." *Obſervations on our Reformers*; pages, 60, 61, 62, 63.

I do yet openly inſiſt that Dr. PRIESTLEY is an "impu- « dent, vindictive, and lawleſs aſſaſſin."—But the *Critical Reviewer* well knew that theſe expreſſions, violently detatched from what preceded them, would have the appearance of abuſe. Therefore let the whole paragraph defend itſelf.—« Dr. PRIESTLEY compares the CHURCH OF ENG- « LAND with the animal which is called the *Sloth*; and he « tells us that he is determined to uſe his utmoſt efforts to « kill the antitype which that animal ſo juſtly repreſents. « Many of our clergy too juſtly deſerve the reproach of « Indolence. I truſt, however, in heaven, that *ſome* ſons « of our church will always have ſufficient activity, and « abilities, to counteract the violence, or the poiſon, of « an impudent, vindictive, and lawleſs aſſaſſin." Page 30.

The *Critical Reviewer* does not forget that I charge *the publick juſtice of this Country* with *ignominious timidity*. The ideas which excited this reflexion are contained in the following ſhort extract from the *Political Obſervations*.— « We are clamorous for freedom, in this country; and « from *the ignominious timidity of publick juſtice*, I have no « doubt that an ungrateful, and abandoned Atheiſt might « diffuſe his poiſon through the kingdom with impunity." *Obſervations*, &c. page 40.

On the ſubject which is now immediately before me, I ſhall go farther, in this letter, than I have gone in my late publication. If our adminiſtration of publick juſtice was not, in theſe times, moſt ignominiouſly timid, and moſt palpably

palpably injudicious, the clown PAINE, whoſe vulgar crudities are fraught with high treaſon, would have been a priſoner in NEWGATE. It is indifferent to *me*, whether a *Critical Reviewer* thinks me a *liberal clergyman*, or *an intemperate zealot of a prieſt*.

A Letter which was publiſhed in the paper of the WORLD, induced me to write my political pamphlet, which, I yet hope, will be well known to the publick. My *unbluſhing* traducer (to adopt his own delicate, elegant, and generous epithet,) confidently aſſerts that *there is reaſon to conſider that letter as my own production*. Were I conſcious of having ſtooped to the mean art of fabricating that letter, I ſhould feel myſelf an inferiour being, in the ſocial, and moral ſcale, even to a *Critical Reviewer*. He knows that he is habituated to every vile artifice, himſelf; and this ſelf-knowledge is his only poſſible reaſon for imagining that *I* wrote the letter with the ſignature of TIBERIUS GRACCHUS:—he does not ſuppoſe, or ſuſpect that I wrote the letter becauſe it's Authour honoured me with literary praiſe; for his conſcience, proſtituted, and ſhattered as it is, likewiſe knows, that he, and his aſſociates, and rivals, have refuſed me that praiſe, for twenty years, from the moſt ungenerous, and ſordid motives; and by no means, from their ſincere opinion that I did *not* deſerve it. I am certain that the publick, from their knowledge of my frank, and open manner, will give more credit to *me*, than to any mercenary Reviewer.—The letter in queſtion was neither written by *me*, nor at my inſtigation: it was written by a very reſpectable perſon; by a gentleman of talents, and of learning, from whom I have the misfortune to differ on ſome important ſubjects: I have it now in my power to name the Authour of the letter; and I *will* name him to this denizen of Grub-ſtreet, if he will creep forth from his hole, and make proper conceſſions to *me*, for the falſe, and profligate accuſation which he has brought againſt me. But he is not capable of making *this* atonement; for he has not a particle of integrity, and honour.

I am charged by this *reptile* with *forcing myſelf into publick notice; with a perpetual, and feveriſh thirſt of notoriety; with an unceaſing deſire of obtruding myſelf, on all topics, and all*

all occaſions, upon the publick attention. In my unaffected, and explicit reply to this accuſation, I beg leave to addreſs myſelf to the world.

Literary fame is the ruling object of my life. I feel (not I hope, with a puerile vanity, nor with an offenſive preſumption) that I have *ſome* title to it, from nature. To repell inſolence; to combat the rude, or dark hoſtilities of ſelfiſhneſs, of malice, and of envy, with ſpirit, and exertion, is not to indulge arrogance, but to promote juſtice. Had not fame ſtrongly attracted me, while I was animated in my perſuit, by conſpiring, and prophetick ſentiment, how could I have perſevered in my courſe, after I had ſometimes deſponded, and relaxed, in my progreſs; after it's vigour had been checked, by various, and powerful misfortunes, and machinations? National prejudice hath been induſtrious to depreſs me; acrimonious bigotry hath urged the ſame unrelenting aim; the power which ought to protect me, ever views me with an implacable frown; and I have always experienced the moſt uncharitable treatment from my pretended brethren; from the profeſſed followers of CHRIST. Thus, doomed to peculiar ſituations, which, required unremitting vigilance, and indefatigable action, to maintain, and improve my ground; I have thought it expedient, from time to time, to vindicate my character, as a writer, when I ſhould have been ambitious to prepare for the acceptance of the publick, more important works; and I have lately been particularly obliged to make ſallies againſt invaders, and marauders (ſallies, however, in which I feel rather a ſportive than a painful war) when I ſhould have wiſhed to cultivate my little territories in peace. Is this attention, and aſſiduity, "forcing myſelf into publick no-"tice;" are they,—"obtruding myſelf on all topicks, "and all occaſions, upon the publick?" Or do they not only ſhow, that I am tenacious (as we ought to be) of intellectual honours; and that I have an earneſt, not an officious regard for the eſteem of my cotemporaries?—Indeed I am perſuaded that the attacks, and tolerably well acted diſdain of my enemies, and *my* retaliations, both, perhaps, deſultory, and tranſient, in the opinion of ſome of my beſt

friends, will, in time, make no inconſiderable parts of the baſis of my laſting reputation.

So, you will not "lift me into any conſeqence by "public altercation."—You are not quite ſuch a fool as to defend thoſe groſs falſehoods, which it is impoſſible for you to diſprove, and which, a failure, in attempting to diſprove them, would only make the baſeneſs of *your* heart more palpable. As to *your lifting of me into any conſequence, that* rant is completely contemptible; it exactly reſembles the impudent gaſconading of a CUSTINE or a DUMOURIER. Your diſhoneſt manœuvres have injured the *intereſt* of authours: to their real, durable, and honourable *conſequence*, you can only contribute by your malevolence, and oppoſition. If, in return to your frauds, and your inſolence, they heighten that ſpirit, and fortify that perſeverance, which they owe to themſelves, to mankind, to their CREATOR; even *your* criticiſms will tend to animate genius, and to diffuſe fame, as certainly as the pulling back of an arrow gives vigour, and length to it's flight.

It is almoſt impoſſible, without a ſmile of ſome contempt, to ſee the *Critical Reviewers* recommend modeſty, and humanity, by railing againſt the oppoſite qualities. —Such advocates for thoſe amiable virtues, reſemble a woman of the town beſtowing laviſh encomiums on the dignity, and beauty of female honour;—or the national convention, and army of FRANCE, ſacrilegiouſly adopting the appellations, or ſtrutting with the enſigns, of the GREAT ROMANS.

PERCIVAL STOCKDALE.

A FAREWELL LETTER TO THE *MONTHLY REVIEWERS.*

May's Buildings, Nov. 6, 1792.

GENTLEMEN,

BE pleaſed to accept this farewell epiſtle. There is ſomething ſo faſcinating in politeneſs, to which *you* certainly, have *ſome* pretenſions, that I will endeavour to return it to you, though I know that you are my enemies. You muſt not, expect, indeed, that my politeneſs to *you*, will be uninterrupted, and uniform, through this letter; for ſuch treatment, I think, you, by no means, deſerve; therefore it cannot be ſhown to you, by a man of ſenſe, and ſpirit, without a total forfeiture of his ſincerity. You ſeem, Gentlemen, to be diſciples of the late Lord CHESTERFIELD; though I muſt confeſs that your imitations of him are rather apiſh mimickries:—in practiſing his *manners*, you rather exhibit gambols, and curvets, than flexible, and flowing bows, and an eaſy, and graceful deportment. But you are not only great proficients, but compleat adepts, in the *morals* of your noble maſter. Compared with your *Alſatian* brethren, the *Critical Reviewers*, you are paragons of urbanity; I had almoſt ſaid, of modeſty, and virtue. When I am murdered by *you*, I

have the honour of decapitation, and of an axe with a fine edge;—the other good creatures, I ſuppoſe, have my ſalvation at heart;—*they* mean to prepare my ſoul for heaven, by endeavouring to inflict on it a primitive martyrdom; by *them* I am *ſawn aſunder*.

I ſhall now turn my attention to your Review for the laſt month; to your very ſincere, and liberal remarks on my "Obſervations on the Writings, and Conduct of our "preſent Political, and Religious Reformers."

Whatever the "irritability of my nervous ſyſtem" may be, it is not in *your* power to diſcompoſe it. They who can do no good, may do ſome harm. You have long been unjuſt, and injurious to my literary reputation; therefore I have, of late, been induſtrious to bring your frauds, your intellectual profligacy, into open day; that I might vindicate, as far as I could, my honeſt intereſt, and my honeſt fame; which no men, leſs iniquitous than Reviewers, would have been ſtrenuous, and pertinacious, to repreſs. It is but a very few months ago, ſince I firſt ſat down ſeriouſly to detect your falſehood, malice, and venality: if I could eaſily have been provoked by ſuch perſons as *you*, I ſhould have ſubmitted to this taſk, often, and long before: I ſtoop to it, diſpaſſionately, and cheerfully; becauſe, I think that the condeſcenſion is a duty which I owe to myſelf;—'tis a taſk which, I flatter myſelf that I perform with ſome alacrity, I am ſure, without any pain, of mind. From my regard to truth, I muſt own the worſt to you; for I am ſure, Gentlemen, whatever you may pretend, it will never give you any pleaſure to be informed of *my* ſatisfaction. I naturally diſlike literary controverſy; and at the commencement of a diſpute with *Reviewers*, I own that I feel a ſtrong intellectual nauſea: —however, after I have reſolutely taken the firſt gulp, you glide eaſily down. As I have been trained, for many years, in the ſchool of adverſity; as I have experienced all the little arts, to diſcourage, and obſcure talents; if I was diſconcerted, wounded, or mortified by *your* attacks, by *your* paltry ſtratagems, I might, indeed, be aſhamed of my puerile, or feminine irritability. My preſent declarations, will, I doubt not, have as much credit as I wiſh, from

from the liberal part of the world;—whether or no *you* will believe me, gives me not a moment's thought; perſonally conſidered, you are totally inſignificant to me;—and we cannot expect that they, who are profeſſionally habituated to violate truth, themſelves, will lay a proper ſtreſs on the veracity of others.

To *ſome* of your cenſures I ſhall make no reply; they are completely deſpicable; therefore they deſerve no notice. You ſay that my "Obſervations are very looſe, "and deſultory."—When you ſaid this, you knew that you were indulging your malice, and impoſing on the publick;—you knew that you were aſſerting *the thing which was not.* If you had done me the juſtice to quote *one* leaf of my pamphlet, it would have demonſtratively given the lye to your malignity; which, by ſuch demonſtration, will, I flatter myſelf, be yet, publickly refuted. You likewiſe aſſert that my Political Obſervations are "ſometimes abuſive, and ſometimes extravagantly "complimentary."—Abuſive they are *never.* I love truth, and moral freedom; thoſe men who are eager to throw the political frame into confuſion, and anarchy; and who would be highly gratified if they could ſtimulate their fellow-citizens to deſtroy the CHURCH OF ENGLAND, I ſhall ever claſs with the worſt enemies to ſociety;——and of *them* I ſhall ever ſpeak, and write as I ſincerely think, they deſerve:—This, ſurely is not, to be abuſive: women of the lighteſt characters are the firſt to cenſure the infirmities of their female neighbours;—and *they* who are payed for abuſe; who are equally induſtrious to abuſe people, from the nature of their diſpoſitions, and from their regard for their intereſt;—*theſe* perſons are always beſt prepared to charge a writer of an independent, and liberal ſpirit, with that deſpicable, and infamous practice.

If I am *extravagantly complimentary*, as I am conſcious that I am ſincere, it is an extravagance which is venial; it is the extravagance of a warm, and benevolent heart. In the tricks of fraud, Gentlemen, I do not think that you are at all maſterly artiſts; and that is one reaſon why I ſometimes am inclined to wonder that you have kept your ground

ground ſo long. You were rather unfortunate in ſelecting Mr. GRANVILLE SHARP, as an object of my hyperbolical encomium.—He and I are ſo ſituated in life, relatively to each other, that even the malignant ingenuity of a Reviewer would find ſome difficulty to perſuade the publick that I praiſed that Gentleman from ſelfiſh views. And I humbly think that it is rather to my honour, that I have not the ſlighteſt cauſe to expect from the perſon on whom I have beſtowed a higher eulogy than I ever before gave to man, what the world calls, any eſſential ſervice. I know that Mr. SHARP's character cannot be to the taſte of *your* ſeditious fraternity. But all who know him; all who are properly acquainted with his character, know, that he has always been devoted to the moſt aſſiduous, and unbounded philanthropy;—that to gratify this God-like diſpoſition, he has made ſacrifices of intereſt as noble as they were uncommon; that his own temperance; his own inſignificant wants, are thoſe of a primitive diſciple of our holy religion;—and that *it is his meat and drink*; his ſupreme luxury, to annihilate, or alleviate the woes of his fellow-creatures. Mr. SHARP muſt, undoubtedly, have his infirmities, his failings; for he is a *man*; therefore, of *this* man I have ſaid, that in *him* we ſee "Chriſtianity "thrown *almoſt* perfectly into life, and action."—A reader of *common* generoſity will, probably, at leaſt, *forgive* this compliment, when he conſiders to whom it is payed:—it is condemned, however, by the *Monthly Reviewers*; for *their* minds are the very *delicacy* of *ſincerity*.

You, and one of your inexorable brethren, a *Critical Reviewer*, have barely informed the publick, that I diſtinguiſhed Dr. PRIESTLEY with the appellation of a *lawleſs aſſaſſin*. As the words are ſtrong, if either academy could have boaſted a ſpark of juſtice, *with* the words the context would have been quoted to which they belong. That context *I* have quoted, in my farewell addreſs to the other *diſſecting* ſchool.—You obſerve that I term PAINE a *tyrant*. I am ſatisfied that the fellow has a moſt *tyrannical* diſpoſition; but as, I thank God, he has no power, the word, *tyrant*, applied to *him*, is rather ludicrous, tranſplanted, alone, as it is by *you*. In juſtice, again,

again, to myſelf, I will beg leave to tranſcribe the whole paragraph in which the word is contained: the extract, I ſhould ſuppoſe, will acquit me of having applied the term ridiculouſly, or acrimoniouſly;—and perhaps the ſame extract may excite no weak ſuſpicion in the mind of an impartial and diſcerning reader, that you committed an ungenerous treſpaſs on truth, when you pronounced the "Obſervations" from which the extract is taken, *very looſe, and deſultory.*

After having ſpoken of the bad effects of the heat of party in this country, and after having obſerved that it had deſtroyed the friendſhip which had long ſubſiſted betwixt Mr. BURKE, and Mr. FOX, I thus proceed.—"I lately experienced an inſtance of this unwholeſome "fermentation of party, in *common* minds. The inſtance "deſerves to be recited; for it tends to ſhow how miſe-"rably your advocates for the unbounded liberty of the "preſs, and for all other liberty, depart from their theory, "when they are put a little to the proof. A literary "teſtimony in my favour, written by a Gentleman who is "diſtinguiſhed in the Republick of Letters, was refuſed "publication by a champion for liberty, merely becauſe "I had not adopted all *his* political creed;—becauſe I "was hoſtile to the French Revolution: becauſe I diſ-"approved HUDIBRAS's *thorough, Godly Reformation.* "This incident makes me recollect one of the many "curious paſſages in Mr. PAINE's *Rights of Man*; a "paſſage which ſhows *what a* TYRANT HE *is, when his own "paſſions are contradicted.* Whether that book abounds "more with barbarous language, bad arguments, or piti-"ful jokes, and puns, it is difficult to ſay. No *Gentleman* "would write againſt Mr. BURKE, but with great defer-"ence; every ingenuous mind, even in diſputing with "him, would be impatient to reſpect him; from ſuch "minds, the reſpect is inſtantaneouſly commanded by his "genius; and it is yet more forcibly commanded by his "virtues. The brutality of PAINE's inſolence to Mr. "BURKE was aggravated by it's ingratitude. This man, "in the beginning of his book, and in his uſual rude "ſtyle, ſeverely cenſures Mr. BURKE for wantonly,

" without provocation, injuriouſly, interfering in the " affairs of FRANCE. Is this the language of an Ame- " rican Patriot; of an advocate for ſuch liberty as is in- " conceivable in civil life? Can an ENGLISHMAN be " impertinent, or culpable, for giving his publick opi- " nion, at any time, of any notorious events that are pro- " duced in FRANCE? And as Mr. BURKE unqueſtionably " thought that the conduct of the French Revolutioniſts " was deteſtable; that it was of obnoxious example to " EUROPE; and that it might be prejudicial to BRITAIN, " was he a preſumptuous, and encroaching meddler, or " was he a good, and meritorious citizen, in giving his " explicit, and free ſentiments, on that revolution, to the " world? Your cenſure of Mr. BURKE for publiſhing " his book on the French Revolution, comes with a " peculiar impropriety, with an unaccountable abſurdity, " from *you*, Mr. PAINE. You are ſo far a citizen of the " world, that I know not to what country, at preſent, " you properly belong; but I know that Mr. BURKE " had a far better right to cenſure, and explode the " French policy, than *you* had to abuſe, and reprobate that " of ENGLAND. Yet you have invaded this country " (I ſhall not uſe a very hyperbolical metaphor) ſword, " and fire in hand; you have uſed your utmoſt efforts to " raiſe the ſpirit of ſedition, and rebellion, among us; " you have inſulted our laws; you have inſulted our So- " vereign; you have endeavoured to tear up our govern- " ment by the roots; and with an audacity unexampled, " you abuſe Mr. BURKE for publiſhing his unreſerved " thoughts on the Revolution of FRANCE."

Obſervations on our Reformers, pages 51, 52, 53, 54.

Are there any words that deſerve the name of *abuſe*, my unprejudiced and ſenſible reader, in this extract? Was it ridiculous, or improper, to call PAINE a *Tyrant*, where I have pronounced him one? Does what you have now read, beſpeak a looſe, and deſultory pamphlet, or a ſeries of reaſoning, and argument?

You ſay that in my "Obſervations" &c. "the National " Aſſembly of FRANCE *is a Bear-garden.*" Here you do me a groſs, and *double* injuſtice; in your uſual way (which, without

without being abuſive, I may pronounce abſolutely *villainous*; you quote a detached, and ſingle expreſſion; and I add (ſtill without applying a ſingle word of abuſe) you are guilty of a deliberate violation of truth. To cite the period which contains your *Bear-Garden*, will be, *to exemplify you.*—" Their meetings [the meetings " of the National Aſſembly] are diſtracted with an in- " temperance of the deſpicable paſſions, which would " diſgrace even a company of ſchool-boys; and which are " far more characteriſtick of the manners of a *Bear-* " *Garden* than of a ſenate."—Page 33.

Of your quotation of a line from my praiſe of the Quakers, I have nothing to ſay, but that the line is miſquoted: my words are:—" *Your* baptiſm has been that " of the ſpirit, and of the lambent fire of truth."

" Had the letter (you ſay) ſigned T. GRACCHUS, been " written by Mr. STOCKDALE himſelf, it could not have " furniſhed him with more acceptable materials for obſer- " vation. He *fortunately* finds in the *letter-writer* that " praiſe which Reviewers *could* not beſtow on him."—Here, Gentlemen, in *your* polite manner, you inſinuate, or rather aſſert to the publick, that I wrote the letter, ſigned, TIBERIUS GRACCHUS, myſelf. If I thought it poſſible that this inſinuation or aſſertion could have the leaſt weight, I ſhould feel a generous indignation againſt it's authours. The *Critical Reviewer*, with a more open, and ſhameleſs inſolence, and effrontery, charges me with having written the letter. I refer you to the reply which I have made to *him*, in conſequence of the charge. But on recollection, I find that I may be completely explicit with you, on the preſent ſubject. The letter with the ſignature of TIBERIUS GRACCHUS, was written by Dr. DUNBAR, Profeſſor of Philoſophy in the Univerſity of ABERDEEN: it was written by that Gentleman voluntarily; without any requeſt, or hint from *me*. I was authoriſed by the Doctor to make this uſe of his name; otherwiſe I certainly ſhould not have mentioned it to *you*:—eſpecially as I well know that the heart of a Reviewer is too obdurate to expreſs, or to feel a proper concern for the meanneſs, and baſeneſs of which you have had the aſſurance publickly to accuſe me. In *that* accuſation,

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as far as *your* influence can go, you have done me great injuſtice. There is not a writer upon earth, whoſe conſcience is more pure from all literary impoſture than *mine*. The ſtriking ſimilarity of the two Reviews of my late Political Pamphlet proves how well I was warranted to tell you that the eſſential remarks that might be made on *one gang* of Reviewers were equally applicable to any other.

The Appendix to my Political Pamphlet, in which I expoſe the venal falſehoods of the *Critical Reviewers*, proves to *you*, that I have not learned to *to kiſs the rod*. This expreſſion convinces me, that you have not formed your ſtyle on the ſchool of Lord CHESTERFIELD, but of ſome low pedant, and pedagogue. *Kiſs the rod*, you ſay! Would you have me pay homage to a *ſink* of literature?

BAYS's Criterion of Genius, and Literature, which you bring againſt me, is I hope, in no way, applicable to *me*. Your many, and often repeated endeavours to hurt me, as an authour, I aſcribe to the depravity of the heart; not to the ſtupidity of the head. You will probably not be mortified with the ſource to which I trace your iniquities:—I have no doubt that your noble maſter, whom you ſometimes, but very awkwardly, imitate, as well as other more ſplendid characters who are exhibited to us in hiſtory, would rather have been thought *Knaves* than *Fools*.

Mr. Fox's rapid powers of acquiring knowledge, which I have contraſted with the ſlow apprehenſion of a ſtupid *Biſhop*;—and the "occaſional prayers, which are com-"poſed, or rather *manufactured*, by the preſent dignitaries "of our Church; and which are the crude vapours of "turtle, and champagne," have *not* eſcaped *your* kind attention, and quotation.—It ſhall now be ſeen why I remark the notice that you have taken of *theſe* two paſſages.

Your treatment of me, Gentlemen, through a long tract of time, has been almoſt uniformly ſingular; and I truſt that it will be deemed by unbiaſſed, and diſtinguiſhing judges, a recommendation of me. Your general aim has been, to treat my writings with contempt; but from what

what cauſe I will not aſſert, *your ſpeech commonly bewrayeth you.*—Your literary verdict was often marked with inconſiſtency;—you were taken by ſurprize into candour; ſome fair ſentiments eſcaped from their black inmates; and weakened the preponderant quantity of condemnation. —When you ſate in judgement on *me*, there was in you the timidity, the heſitation, the incoherence of guilt: and indeed, notwithſtanding the inequality, and inſufficiency of human inſtitutions; agreeably to the moral economy of GOD, why ſhould not even the *horrours* of guilt agitate the wretch who endeavours to murder his neighbour's intellectual reputation, as well as the culprit who deſtroys his body? Perhaps, in a philoſophical, and abſtracted view, the One is as great a criminal as the Other.

You have almoſt invariably practiſed againſt me two of the equally diſhoneſt, and deſpicable ſubterfuges, by which you are careful to keep back from the publick, the *real* abilities, and character of an authour. You never gave me fair-play; you never gave a quotation of any length, from thoſe parts of my productions which, you knew, would do me moſt credit (though you have been liberal, in this way, to authours of very poor pretenſions) becauſe you were conſcious that ſuch liberality ſhown to *me*, would counteract the aim of your ſelfiſhneſs, and malignity. —You have induſtriouſly ſelected little fragments, which, in their incomplete ſtate, might make me particularly obnoxious to literary cenſure, or to the pride of the Great. Subdued, at length (not a twelve-month ago) by a ſpirited perſeverance, and overpowered by truth, which is, *ſometimes*, irreſiſtible, you, and even the other Reviewers, made a kind of critical recantation, and ſpoke of me in terms of praiſe. I met your advances with amicable ſentiments; I expunged from my mind every remembrance of the numerous injuries that had paſſed; thus *my* diſpoſition aggravates the guilt of *yours*. But this rectitude you ſoon deſerted: epiſcopal wealth, and power, extremely gravitating weights, and ever hoſtile to the elevation of genius, ſtepped between me, and critical juſtice;—they wreſted from your hands the golden ballance of equity; and planted in them, again, the *tuck*, and the

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ſtiletto. In your laſt review, in which you have honoured me with your perfidious, but palpable hoſtilities, after profeſſing unſhaken candour; a warm love of truth, and juſtice, and as warm a ſenſe of your duty to the publick, you ſeem to have improved on your long-eſtabliſhed, and long practiſed iniquity. You have mutilated, and dragged into your critique, ſingle expreſſions; wrenched from their context, indiſputably, to make the writer appear odious, or ridiculous;—for it is evident that in their proper ſtation, they can make no unfavourable impreſſion on ſenſible, and unprejudiced readers. To do me all the diſſervice in your power, you have determined that every biſhop who ſlumbers over a *Monthly Review*, ſhall dream of my animadverſions on his dullneſs, and ſenſuality. Alas! you cannot make *theſe* men more *anti-chriſtian* to *me* than they *have* been for many years: but I have not to thank *you* that their malice admits not augmentation;—I am to thank the kind, and reſtraining hand of nature, which limits the extent of our vices as well as of our virtues.

Muſt not a mind of the leaſt diſcernment perceive, that by this long, and obſtinate literary warfare; by theſe irreſolute, and timorous attacks; by theſe petty ſtratagems, *merit* was involuntarily acknowledged? Merit, which was to be defeated, if it was poſſible, and buried in oblivion.

While you played off againſt me the little machinations which I have deſcribed, you aſſured me, in the ſame breath, that "you wiſhed not to depreciate my literary "reputation, nor to retard my advancement in the line of "my profeſſion."—After this juſt, and full ſtatement of a very particular caſe, can the inhabitants of this enlightened iſland, be ſtill deceived by theſe men?—It is not my own cauſe, only, that I am pleading; I ſcorn to entertain any perſonal animoſity againſt perſonal inſignificance: I only wiſh to ſee every friend of literature no longer miſled by proſtitute, and miſchievous hypocrites:—I wiſh to have my own literary character, and that of every liberal writer, determined by the unprejudiced, and fully informed judgement of the publick; to promote

theſe

theſe important ends, I have, of late, addreſſed *Reviewers:* the objects to which I aſpired, reconciled me to my deſcent.

I have ſometimes converſed with talents depreſſed with difficulties; I was induſtrious to conſole, and animate them with all the tenderneſs, with all the little eloquence of which I was maſter;—I gave them *ardent* praiſe; for it was uncorrupted with envy. Alas! *this* was all the friendſhip that I could beſtow!—*You* Reviewers have been aſſiduous, and not in *one* inſtance, nor againſt *one* authour, to aggravate thoſe misfortunes which aſſailed the heart; and to augment thoſe difficulties which oppoſed the glorious improvements, and victories, of the mind. If my works *deſerve* exiſtence, they will flouriſh when *yours* are annihilated; and, with all my ſins upon my head, I truſt in GOD, that at the laſt, univerſal, and infallible *Review*, I ſhall equally eclipſe you, as a candidate for a better immortality. I hope that while I live I ſhall not write another letter to a *Reviewer*.

I am, Gentlemen,

Your moſt obedient,

And moſt humble Servant,

PERCIVAL STOCKDALE.

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